

OVER THE TOP

man soldiers who, just two years before, had contested the summit of these hills in a bloody hand to hand combat. During the Crown Prince's attack on the forts of Verdun, the inferno of battle raged continuously for months with a fierceness and intensity possible only to modern warfare. There was something in the general aspect of the place that far transcended what our imagination had pictured to us from reading and hearing about it. The effect was wierd and sombre. It was indeed the "Abomination of Desolation."

Although we were hourly awaiting an order to move up on the front, where a terrific battle was being waged on a big scale with heavy losses on both sides, we felt practically no suspense or anxiety. By this time we had ceased to brood over our fate, whatever it might be, and had begun to accept everything as a matter of course. During the five days, November 7-11, our entire future was focused at a very close range. The possible action of the next twelve hours interested us intensely, but we seldom thought of the future more than twenty-four hours ahead. Like a great athlete, on the eve of a hard contest, after a season of strenuous training, we felt that a test of our powers and skill was at hand. But we were nerved for the occasion. We were awaiting the fateful hour with eager expectancy.